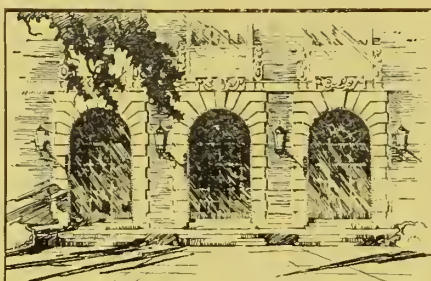


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THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARY

by

ESTHER ANNA MAXWELL

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

IN THE STATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

in the

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OF Bachelor of Library Science

Latharine G. Sharp

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Library Science



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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARY

As long perhaps as the Sunday-school has existed there has been in connection with it a library, which has played a more or less important part in forming the reading habits of the people. Often now as in earlier times the Sunday-school library furnishes the only available collection of books in many communities, especially in those places which are far removed from the larger cities with their many advantages.

However, with the increase of public libraries, and the many agencies for the distribution of good literature, the problem has changed somewhat.

Many favor making the public library a center of local book supply, at least for general and recreative reading, leaving the collection of theological and sectarian literature, Sunday-school helps, etc, to the Sunday-school collection.

Branches.

In some cases the Sunday-school library has been made a branch of the public library, so that the books may be changed often and the schools may have a variety of good books with very little expense. Such co-operation we can accept gladly whenever the public library is in a position to offer it, and whenever we can be sure that the selection of books to be sent to the Sunday-school will be made with understanding of the needs of the special school to be provided for.

The Milwaukee Public library sends out a number of small libraries to different Sunday-schools in the city, and has found the system to

be a very excellent one. The St. Louis Public library is carrying on a similar work, supplying several Sunday-schools with stocks of books, which are changed from time to time.

Traveling libraries.

There are also traveling Sunday-school libraries, different schools in a certain part of the country exchanging small collections. This was first tried with success in the First-day schools of the Baltimore yearly meeting of Friends 1896, and in 1898 books were being sent to the meeting of Friends of the First-day schools of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Ladies commission.

Various organizations have been formed for the purpose of improving the character of Sunday-school literature. The first in the field was the Ladies commission on Sunday-school books organized in 1865 in connection with the American unitarian association at Boston.

Church library association.

The Church library association was organized in 1879 for the purpose of selecting books for Sunday-school and parish libraries in the Episcopal church, and to publish lists of such books. "It consists of about forty ladies and gentlemen, communicants of the church who are divided into reading committees of not less than eight members each. Every book presented for consideration is read by each member of a committee, who must give a written opinion regarding it. If a majority of these opinions are favorable the book is then bought before the monthly meeting of the association, the opinions are read, and a discussion is held upon the merits of the work. A vote is then taken, and if one-fourth of the members present object to the

book it fails to be placed upon the list."

The association issued a list of books in 1881, and has followed it with annual lists since. In 1900 a general catalog was issued, based upon the former lists.

American New-church Sunday-school association.

The American New-church Sunday-school association also takes up this work. Its purpose is "To help children to find the good books which lie hidden on the shelves of our New-church Sunday-school libraries; to help librarians discarding useless books and adding new ones, and especially to help parents and teachers in the important duty of guiding their children's reading, from whatever source obtained". A book list, revised edition, 1896, has been published with yearly supplements since. The lists are carefully chosen and are especially useful because of their annotations. Various publishers of Sunday-school books have undertaken work of this kind, preparing catalogs, showing some care in selection, and often having annotations.

Object of the Sunday-school library.

Some librarians have advocated abolishing the Sunday-school library on the ground that the public library furnished all there was required and reached the children better than ever before. But the Sunday-school library has its own work to do and has special advantages for doing it.

The object of the Sunday-school library should never be to compete with the public library in any way, but should endeavor to supplement its work. While the public library has to be very general in order to supply the needs of all classes and ages, the scope of the Sunday-school library is very narrow. It has its special

class of readers, differing in the various communities and schools; therefore the books should be carefully chosen for the special school to be supplied.

There are two ideas of what a Sunday-school library should be; first, that which is very general in character; and second, that which is, strictly speaking, a working or reference collection, for aid in the study of the Bible.

General Collection.

The first type includes general literature, fiction, not of a particular religious character, miscellaneous biography, books of description and travel, history, science, as well as books about the Bible, missions, religious history, etc.

A good example of this sort of a collection is the list prepared by Mrs. Zella Allen Dixon of Chicago University library for the Hyde Park Sunday-school. This list represents a very broad selection, including the best books in the various subjects.

The book lists prepared by the American New-church Sunday-school association include only children's books, but showing a varied collection. Among them are picture-books, nature books, books of travel, history, historical fiction, biographies, and a very few of those books known as "Sunday-school books".

Reference collection.

The second type, that of a working or reference collection seems to be the solution of the problem of Sunday-school libraries. If it were possible for the library to narrow its scope and to circulate books chiefly as aids for Sunday-school lessons it would undoubtedly fare better.

Such a collection should include dictionaries, commentaries, biographies of Bible characters, of noted men and women of the church,

of missionaries, etc. In connection with the latter, material about missionaries, who are supported wholly or partly by the particular church or Sunday-school would be of special interest. Fiction should be included only so far as it deals with Bible times and history, standard works only being chosen.

This kind of a library is the most useful and often only possible in a town or city where there is a good public library, making general literature easily available to all. Not many public libraries would be apt to specialize in religious literature; therefore its proper place is surely in the Sunday-school where it is needed, and where it is most convenient.

The Sunday-school book.

The history of Sunday-school books has been a curious one, reflecting in a striking manner the tendencies of the age in which they flourished. In the early days they contained very distinct sectarian teaching; later this was gradually dropped and the most popular books were those inculcating only the broad religious principles on which all were alike agreed.

At a still later period those books were in favor which illustrated, by example rather than by direct teaching, rules of conduct and of morals to be followed. But such books are no longer in demand; the Sunday-school books put forth as such have disappeared.

Formerly the masterpieces of fiction were felt to be not sufficiently religious in tone to be selected for Sunday-school libraries, and a special class of books came into existence. Most of these were narrow, insipid and weak, and were the means of weakening the power and usefulness of the Sunday-school library.

Principles of selection.

The greatest difficulty and the point most disagreed upon is the selection of books and this is certainly the most important part of the work.

In selecting books for a Sunday-school library, much depends upon the class of people in the school and their special needs. A few essential principles, however, should be followed which would apply either to the general collection or to the working collection; but perhaps more so to the former in which the problem is more difficult.

(1) Standard authors should be chosen; in many Sunday-school libraries authors are not carefully chosen and many inferior ones are admitted.

(2) Only those books which give a true idea of life should be selected; the majority of those formerly included gave a totally false conception; these were commonly known as "goody-goody books".

(3) The books should have some literary merit, fairly good English being used; and those rejected which abound in slang or in which dialect or incorrect language is prominent.

(4) Books though perhaps entertaining, but having no purpose or special merit, should not be in the library. They leave no impression either good or bad with the reader, merely serving for the diversion of the moment.

(5) Cheap books ought not to be admitted. Some of those published by Sunday-school publishing companies are very poorly made, having cheap binding and illustrations. It would pay better to have fewer books and to have these fairly well made than to have a great many and cheaply made.

(6) In a general collection a variety of subjects and authors is desirable.

(7) Each book should be examined thoroughly by competent persons.

Personal work.

Much personal work can be done in the Sunday-school by teachers and librarian, in bringing to the attention of the pupils the good books which the library contains; and those which will aid them in their study of Bible lands and characters.

Pictures.

A collection of good pictures would be a very valuable addition to any Sunday-school library. Those which have some connection with the lessons might be chosen to be used in the study and teaching; also good reproductions of works of art could be used and these pictures might be exhibited a few at a time, thus helping to make the library a more attractive place.

New books.

In order to keep the library before the minds of the Sunday-school pupils and not to let the interest, once aroused, die out gradually, as is the case in so many libraries, new books must be purchased frequently. Instead of buying a large stock of books each year or two, if every few weeks a few could be added, the interest would undoubtedly be greater.

Attention may be called to these books in various ways by the teacher; by the superintendent; by the librarian; or by a new book list posted in a conspicuous place.

Conclusion.

The Sunday-school library should be aided and encouraged when-

ever possible, as it has an important mission to perform in supplying the special needs and demands of a special class of readers.

In the last few years the public library has become more interested in the Sunday-school library, and has in many instances done much toward prolonging its existence. Such co-operation between the Sunday-school and the public library, as well as co-operation between different Sunday-schools is what is needed at present in order to obtain a variety of literature and a higher quality than has been heretofore chosen.

Where there is a good general collection available the Sunday-school library would do well to specialize in a good reference collection, for use in connection with Sunday-school work.

In the selection of books for the library, a high class of literature is to be advocated. Great care should be taken in the selection, and the collection should be changed and added to from time to time.

Every means should be used to bring before the Sunday-school pupils and the people of the church, the advantages of the library, to arouse their interest and pride in their own library; and to secure their aid whenever needed.

Reorganization of a Sunday-school library.

The Sunday-school library of the Presbyterian church, Champaign, Illinois, consisted in January, 1902, of about 600 volumes; being a miscellaneous collection which had its beginning in the early days of the church. Some of the books had been in the library many years; from time to time small additions had been made, the last being about 1890, and at this time a printed finding list was issued.

For several years the library had not been looked over and the

books were in a very bad condition, many being badly worn and many missing.

Arrangement.

The books were roughly classified into those suitable for very young children, those for the intermediate class, and those for adults. They were alphabetized by title after a fashion.

The pigeon hole system was used, the books being marked consecutively corresponding to the number on the pigeon holes; the numbers of the books were on the book plate, on the inside of the front cover. When any new books were added they were placed after all the old ones.

In most of the Sunday-school libraries the system of classification has been a fixed one; a certain number was taken as a basis and pigeon holes provided for this number. By this system there was no provision for future additions, but the new books must be put in place of discarded one.

The advantage thought to be gained by this method was the ability to see at a glance what books were out, and an easy method of charging.

However, a library is much more useful if a relative classification is chosen; new books may be inserted at any time; the works of one author or upon a certain subject always stand together upon the shelves, and the numbering is permanent, never having to be entirely changed as is the case in a fixed system of the kind described.

Charging.

For charging the books the Perpetual library record card was used. This card is divided on both sides into small squares num-

bered from 1 to 648, while in the middle of one side is a space for the name, class and number of the borrower. When a book is drawn, the date is written in the space containing the number corresponding to that in the book, and the card is placed in the pigeon hole from which the book has been taken. This forms a time record and in order to detect overdue books all the record cards had to be examined.

The reader also carried a card with his name and that of his teacher on it, on this were written the numbers of the books wanted, the ones drawn being crossed out. The borrower carried his card but had no way of telling when his book was due. No statistics were kept and no report made.

Delinquents.

A postal card was sent if the books were not returned in two weeks, and a fine of five cents per week charged for overdue books; these, however, were seldom sent out, and fines were seldom imposed.

Hours.

The library is open only on Sunday, the books being given out before and after Sunday-school.

Reorganization.

The library was first looked over thoroughly, and all books badly worn or which for any reason were considered unsuitable were rejected. The Book committee of the Sunday-school then looked these over, some of which they decided to keep and the rest were to be given to poor children. Those books only slightly injured were mended. After the library had thus been looked over and about thirty new books added there were about 450 books in the collection.

The library is a general one including books about the Bible,

religious history, biography, fiction, etc.

Supplies.

The following supplies were used in the reorganization:

Pens, 1 doz.	.10
Black ink	.10
Red ink	.05
Higgins drawing paste	.15
Muslin, 1 yd.	.10
Blank accession book	.25
Dennison labels No. 213, five boxes	.25
Heavy P. pads, five	.50
Catalog cards 33 l. 1,000	2.25
Minila guides	.25
Catalog box	1.00
Date stamp and pad	.40
Total -----	\$5.40

Accession book.

A good sized note book with lines was used for an accession book; this was ruled off in columns for the following items; number, author, title, place and publisher, source, cost, class number, book number, volume and remarks.

The Library school rules were followed with some exceptions; e.g. edition, editor, translator or series were not given. In so small a library many items were unnecessary; for identification the details given would suffice in almost every case. The accession number was entered in the book on the first recto after the title page.

Labeling.

Dennison labels No. 213 were used, being put about 1/2 inch from the bottom of the book.

Classification.

The Dewey Abridged decimal classification was used in classifying the books; F indicating fiction, J. juvenile, and B. biography. For the other classes three figures were used, except in history and travel. The proportion of classed books was so small that it was unnecessary to subdivide. Where the three figures were used only the secondary divisions were used as all books coming between class 170 and 180 were given the number 170. The plan of carrying the numbers out further was tried at first but it was impracticable as the numbers were so scattering and only one book often was under a certain division. There should be as few different numbers as possible in order to make the system as simple as possible for the librarian and the users of the library.

Small slips were posted on the shelves containing the names of the different subjects.

Book numbers.

The Cutter author table was used for the assignment of book numbers.

Shelf list.

The shelf list was made on heavy postal size slips, the items given being, call number, author's surname, short title, and accession number. The shelf list was a necessity both in the assignment of book numbers, and as a means of telling at any time just what and how much there is on a certain subject in the library.

Cataloging.

The Library school rules for a dictionary catalog were followed with modifications.

The only items of imprint which were given were author, title,

paging, illustrations, place and date.

No author dates were given.

A very short title was given unless a longer one was needed to complete the sense.

Edition was not noted, because it rarely occurred and was not essential.

Only main paging was given.

If a book had only one or two illustrations they were not given, being noted only when a book was fully illustrated.

Portraits, plates, photographs, fac-similes, etc., were all treated as illustrations; maps were also noted.

The date of publication was used, and in case there were none, the copyright date was given.

The call number was entered in red ink in the left hand upper corner of the catalog card, and the accession number on the back of the card in black ink.

Analytics of a few pages were brought out.

The subject headings were written in red ink, being taken from the A. L. A. List of subject headings.

No colored cards were introduced.

The catalog is primarily for the use of the librarian and teachers of the Sunday-school.

For the borrowers a printed book list is more useful, as each may possess one. A finding list may be made at any time from the shelf list, arranged in any way desired. For a very small library a printed list is not very necessary, if access to shelves is granted to the borrowers.

In the organization the books were handled but twice; first

while being accessioned, and second, while being labeled, classified, shelf listed, numbered and cataloged.

Charging system.

Manila V slips are used for charging the books, and upon these are written the call number and name of borrower, when all books have been given out for the day the date is stamped upon each slip and these are filed by call number behind a date guide.

The borrower carries a card with his teacher's name and his own name written on it; upon this is stamped the date of issue and when the book is returned the date is stamped opposite that of issue. A slip of paper tipped in on the front or back cover of the book, to be used as a dating slip may be used instead of a borrower's card; the date of issue or return being stamped upon it. This would be much cheaper and serve the same purpose. By this system one may answer the questions: Who has a certain book? When did he take it? What books are overdue? How many books are out? How many books in a certain class are out?

The slips may be destroyed after the necessary statistics have been taken; each Sunday these should be recorded. The following statistics are useful: number of juvenile books, fiction and classed books circulated; total number of books drawn; number of borrowers, average number of books drawn each Sunday; total number for the year.

The weekly statistics could be given to the Secretary of the Sunday-school to record and to read with his weekly report.

Access to shelves.

Access to shelves is urged. As the room is very small it may not be possible to admit all who desire to come to the shelves at once, but arrangement might be made to admit a few at one time.

Borrowers.

Every member of the Sunday-school is entitled to a card.

Books may be kept two weeks and are renewed on request.

Lists.

A list of the new books were prepared and posted at the entrance to the library. Short lists on different subjects posted at various times might do much to arouse the interest in the library.

It is well to have the Sunday-school systematically organized according to modern methods; thus making the administration of the library as easy as possible and books of the library accessible to the borrowers.

READING LIST

Brooks, M. H.

Sunday-school libraries (see L. j. Sept. 1879, 4:
c 338)

Catalog for Sunday-school library (see Pub. libs. June 1896,
1:65)

Chamlerlain, L. T.

Charging system for Sunday-school libraries (see L.j
May 1881, 6:159-60)

Dixon, M. A.

Sunday-school libraries (see Pub. libs. May 1900,
5: 211 - 12)

Dunning, A. E.

(The) Sunday-school library. 1884.

Foote, E. L.

(The) librarian of the Sunday-school; a manual with a
chapter on the Sunday-school lib. by Martha Thorne Wheeler,
1896.

Foote, E. L.

Sunday-school libraries again (see Pub. libs. June
1901, 6: 332-33.)

Green, S. S.

Selecting of books for Sunday-school libraries and their

introduction to children (see L.j. Oct. 1882, 7:250-51)

Manny, F. A.

Place of the library in educational work (see Pub. lib.
Feb. 1898, 3:43-44)

(The) public library no substitute for that of Sunday-school
(see Pub. libs. Jan 1901, 6:16)

Steiner, B. C.

Sunday-school library question (see L.j. July 1898,
23:276-77)

(The) Sunday-school library.(see Pub. libs. Apr. 1899,
4:170-71)

(The) Sunday-school library (see L.j. Nov. 1881,
6:288-89; Feb. 1891, 16:37-38; 1898, 23:cl70;
April 1899, 24:160; Feb. 1900,25:68-69)

Sunday-school library association (see L.j. March 1886,
11:77-78)

Welsh, Charles

Children's books that have lived (see Library 1899-
1900, 11:319-23)

Wheeler, M. T.

The Sunday-school library (see lib. notes 1887-93,
v. 2-3, p.391-401)

Winship, A. E.

Pernicious literature. (see L.j. Feb. 1896, 16:46)

Yust, W. F.

(The) Sunday-school library; its nature and function

(see Pub. libs. Jan. 1899, 4:20-22)





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